

REMARKS

Favorable consideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 13-26 are pending, Claims 1-12 having been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer and Claims 13-26 having been added by way of the present amendment. New Claims 13-26 find support in original Claims 1-12 and in the specification as originally filed, and consequently no new matter is added.

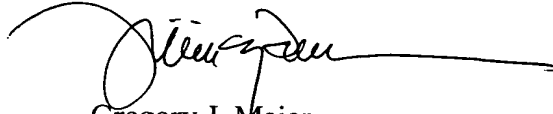
Because numerous amendments have been made to the specification, consistent with U.S. patent drafting practice, each amendment is believed to be made as a matter of form. However, to the extent any amendment to the specification is substantively inconsistent with the originally filed specification, the language included in the originally filed specification should be construed as containing the controlling language. Due to the large number of changes, and for the Examiner's convenience, a "clean copy" of the specification is filed herewith that includes all the amendments made by way of the present Preliminary Amendment. Also filed herewith, for the Examiner's convenience, is an International Preliminary Examination Report.

At the present time, the undersigned are working with Directors of Technology Center 2800, Mr. Stuart Levy and Ms. Janice Howell, in establishing a special procedure for handling Information Disclosure Statements for this case and numerous other related cases. Accordingly, for efficiency purposes, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned to ascertain the present status of this procedure if no such indication is included in the file at the time of examination.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, an action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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